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# Still Life

By  
Robert Szatmari

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
The Requirements for the degree

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MFA Photography Program  
School of Photographic Arts and Sciences  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Rochester, NY

----- 5/21/03

Angela Kelly, Thesis Committee Chair  
Associate Professor  
School of Photographic Arts and Sciences

-----  
Jeff Weiss  
Associate Professor  
School of Photographic Arts and Sciences

----- 5/21/03

Elliot Rubenstein  
Professor  
School of Photographic Arts and Sciences

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Angela Kelly

Jeff Weiss

Elliott Rubenstein

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# Still Life

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# Still Life

Family: (*fam-i-lee*) n 1. Parents and their children. 2. A person's children. 3. A set of relatives. 4. All the descendants of a common ancestor, their line of descent.

Famish v. To suffer from extreme hunger.<sup>1</sup>

As you can see from the above, there are several definitions of "family" that exists in the Oxford Dictionary. However, none of these definitions are satisfying to me as an adequate explanation of the family experience. I felt that it was somewhat ironic that the next word underneath in the dictionary should have a closer emotional description of the family experience albeit a symbolic one rather than a literal definition.

My exhibit *Still Life* attempts to define the experiences and observations of my family through images. The work hopefully expresses the more visceral and psychological nature of family interaction displayed in the realm of visual art. But in order to accomplish this task, there were certain barriers that would have to be

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford American Dictionary Avon Books Ehrich, Carruth, and Hawkins

stripped away in order for one to see what was there underneath the "veneer" of the "familial gaze". Within this paper I will define and identify the familial gaze and its effect on the viewing of family images. Furthermore, I will try to explain how some aspects of our culture have exploited these social conventions for their own ends. The American Conservative Christian organizations (commonly referred to as the Religious Right) are just one prime example of how the familial social codes can be used as a tool for propaganda.

The use of the familial gaze is not exclusive to the conservative wing of American religious institutions, but includes many forms of popular culture most notably the media of television. And then having seen how the gaze works against more substantial engagement in what we view, I will then explain how it can be exposed and subverted in visual art. In the works of Christian Boltanski for example, he uses the conventions against itself, effectively revealing the influence of the social codes. And in conclusion I will take you through the processes of my work and my intentions to subvert the familial gaze by using manipulated images from my family album.

## The Pictorial genre of the portrait

In Ernst Van Alphen's writings on Christian Boltanski's work *Sans Souci*, (which I will devote more time to later on), he provides some vital analysis on the portrait genre in regards to both the photographic and painterly arts. This analysis is essential to the overall summation of *Still Life* and how it relates to the whole concept of the social codification of images. Van Alphen uses the history of the pictorial genre as a necessary piece of a larger statement on how imagery of this kind is ultimately flawed in its ability to portray *realness* in a subject. Van Alphen states, "The pictorial genre of the portrait, whether painterly or photographic, doubly epitomizes the cornerstone of Western culture. The uniqueness of the individual and his accomplishments are central to the culture and in the portrait, originality comes twice. The portrait is highly esteemed as a genre because, according to the standard view in a successful portrait the viewer is confronted not only with the "original", "unique" subjectivity of the portrayer, but also with that of the portrayed."<sup>2</sup>

A process referred to, as "mimetic representation" is a belief that the artistic process can capture the essential qualities of a human

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<sup>2</sup> *Nazism in the Family Album: Christian Boltanski* by Ernst Van Alphen page 34

being and not merely the outward appearance or likeness of a person. Van Alphen refers to the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer as a proponent of this line of thinking. "Gadamer claims, an individual is represented not as idealized, nor in an incidental moment, but in the essential quality of his true appearance."<sup>3</sup>.

But Van Alphen brings to our attention that this description of portraiture illustrates the "contradictory nature of mimetic representation." Traditional notions of the portrait depend upon a rhetorical strategy of make believe.<sup>4</sup> This implies that the idea of authenticity is dependant upon a specific method of representation. Socially rooted conceptions of authenticity are based on the ideas that a special relationship exists between the artist and the subject. It is during this process of creating a portrait that the true "essence" of the portrayed becomes visible.

Van Alphen's choice of the artist Rembrandt as an example of mimetic rhetoric, explains how we perceive the artist's numerous self-portraits as authentic, but in truth, how do we know how accurate they truly are? Is it not true that other artists who have painted his portrait would have the same objectiveness and accuracy in creating his

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<sup>3</sup> Nazism in the Family Album: Christian Boltanski

<sup>4</sup> Mimesis as Make-Believe by Kendall Walton 1993



likeness? Who is to say that one portrait is more authentic than the others and which one is the bona fide Rembrandt?



Self-Portrait Rembrandt 1669



Portrait of Rembrandt by Jan Lievens 1598

The portrait's projection of authority onto the subject is linked to the rhetoric of *mimetic representation*, and here Van Alphen brings his point to the forefront. "The illusion of the presence and authenticity of the portrayed subject presupposes, however, belief in the unity of the signifier and the signified. The bourgeois self depends on a specific mode of representation for its authenticity."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Nazism in the Family: Christian Boltanski by Ernst Van Alphen Album pages 35-36

I will discuss in Boltanski's work how he challenges the unity of this authorship and how it relates significantly with my own exhibition Still Life. But I would like to discuss the snapshot and the birth of the family album out of the more formal pictorial genre.

### **Birth of the snapshot**

With the invention of the portable camera (most notably the inventions of George Eastman) whose vision was to tap into the common folks desire to document their own likenesses (without the need of third party). The Brownie Camera and many other similar devices would follow; creating a class of photography we now commonly refer to as amateur photography.

The term "snapshot" which originally meant the quick shot from a gun was extended to casual photography at the end of the 19th century. The cataloguing and collecting of images would become a traditional custom, especially in regards to the taking pictures of family members and events. Having a collection of family albums became part of the American family tradition.

I do not pretend to have created a line of original thought or theory in this matter. Instead I have chosen to emphasize on the personal nature of my art (when is art ever impersonal?). The subject is about my family, which of course has great significance for me. My intention was that there would be enough common ground to communicate to a wider audience that exists beyond my family; based on other people's experiences they could translate the work into the context of their own familial history.

*Still Life* was an attempt to break through the social codes of family photographs in order to reach the deeper meanings of family experiences and relationships. The social codes of family images, is a term defined by the author Marian Hirsch. The *familial gaze* as it has been coined, is a complex set of social codes projected onto images by the observer. I would like to discuss this further by referring to Hirsch's book *Family Frames* as well as Ann Burlein's "Focusing on the Family".



## **The Familial Gaze**

"Family portraits are images of a particular kind, eliciting specifically related forms of reading. Recognizing an image as familial elicits a specific kind of readerly or spectral look. Family pictures offer conventional surfaces resistant to deeper scrutiny. They say more about family romances than about actual details of familial life."<sup>6</sup> So in the process of taking images of our family, we conform to the conventions of family portraits. Our shot selection is meant to replicate what we have seen in other family snapshots publicly or privately.

The concept of the modern day nuclear family (meaning a social unit that consists of a mother, a father, and their children.) came of age within the United States in the decade of the 1950's after it's rise to superpower status post World War II. This model family unit has been projected upon the mainstream public of the United States and reinforced through fictitious representations by political and commercial venues. Television shows of the 50's helped fuel the family romance of an idealized family life (complete with traditional patriarchal structures intact). Setting a standard to strive for that was extremely difficult for most American families (White Anglo-Saxon

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<sup>6</sup> Marianne Hirsch from her book *Family Frames*.

Protestant) and utterly unattainable for others (minorities and people of alternative lifestyles).

The conservative Religious Right would later reference this unrealistic image of family in our time. The term they would use called "family values" was based on the family romance of an age where many of the political upheavals of the 1960's and 70's did not yet take place. Growing up in a single parent household this objectified family image would be even more difficult to relate. Since I did not have a complete family unit the model in which I lived in would be considered flawed and a symptom of our modern times.

In "Focusing on the Family" by Ann Burlein, she focuses on the connection of family pictures to the politics of the Religious Right's James Dobson. Dobson's organization is "dedicated to the preservation of the home." And one of his methods of achieving this goal is through the use of family propaganda. Dobson uses the familial gaze and the nostalgia of 1950's mythology as a method to construct visual memories that deflect problems of the present day and protect us from history<sup>7</sup>. In Burlein's own words she deconstructs what we see in family photographs. "People most often see their family indirectly,

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<sup>7</sup> Focusing on the Family A. Burlein pg 317

through a screen onto which they project an image of the family they want to be. Family photography liberalizes this psychic screen. We pose for the camera by composing our features and bodies in order to present the "proper" image, conforming to a genre convention for what a family photo looks like."<sup>8</sup>

Dobson uses this knowledge as a stratagem for his own purposes, namely the Christianization of America. He accomplishes his propaganda through his organizations media bombardment with a stream of photographs of happy families (White Christian families) promoting an institutional memory. Burlein sets an example. The video that the organization produced to commemorate its new forty-seven acre campus in Colorado Springs, contains home footage of Dobson as a child. Little Jimmy Dobson toddles in the park with his parents while a voice over attributes the organization's inspiration to Dobson's relationship with his father (a Nazarene Minister) and his resulting commitment to give every child a childhood like his.<sup>9</sup>

"A childhood like his?" I doubt that Dobson himself had the same childhood, as he would like others to believe. Nonetheless this idealized

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<sup>8</sup> Focusing on the Family by Ann Burlein page 317

<sup>9</sup> Focusing on the Family by Ann Burlien page 314

family is very attractive to many people, allowing them to romance the myth of family values even if they cannot successfully achieve it. But the familial gaze focuses on a homogenous vision of people's family life. All the elements are there; father, mother, son, daughter, sister and brother, as well as house, car and family pet. These superficial resemblances give us a false reference point in which to emulate.

The Religious Right harkens back to the era of familial bliss of the 1950's, a so-called Golden Age of American life. Television shows such as the famous "Leave it to Beaver" show a family life that few today could relate to. The show has its regimented roles for the family. Mr. Cleaver is the patriarch and sole breadwinner for the family, while Mrs. Cleaver is in her uniform (a fetching apron) in the kitchen, (always in the kitchen I might add), while the two boys are well behaved and adjusted youths with no serious visible problems.





Leave it to Beaver © ABC



Father Knows Best © CBS

I may look back at this show and ones similar to it with a sense of cynicism. Deep down, however, the series triggers feelings of desire for things that were missing in my own family experience. There is a powerful sense of loss for something that I know does not exist in my childhood. Nevertheless, the feeling that my family life did not measure up to this high watermark continues to resonate within me.

I can still remember as a child, comparing my sense of loss with the enriched interaction of the TV characters. Why can't my family be more like them? My family album contains many pictures of my grandparents with my mother as a child and even pictures of my parents wedding reception, photographs of my first birthday party are

the only images I have of my family as a whole. I have no memory of the events and it seems so inconceivable to me that these images existed.

The feelings remain to this day. I have accepted the situation, knowing that the mythological family ideal is in direct conflict with the reality I have lived. Perhaps this why I have found myself lacking the desire to take family images or snapshots as an adult. It is conceivable that I have realized the falsehood of these images subconsciously and have no wish to perpetuate the illusion further.

But my desire to deconstruct my own family mythology and reconstruct it in my own vision maybe the only way I can accept it for what it is. In *Still Life*, I found myself fighting a two front war: the personal images that emoted such private feelings and trying to cope with the emotions and also the social codification of the images, which subverted any personal reading beyond the superficial poses of the genre. I found myself at odds with the familial gaze, which set into motion my desire to expose its underpinnings.

## Sans Souci

There is no better example of exposing the familial gaze then in the works of artist Christian Boltanski. The Holocaust has long been a subject for Boltanski, including such works as *Monuments* where he used photographs of classmates (including himself), which evoke an altar like memorial of long since past memories. This work dealt more with loss and absence rather than giving a historical documented presence to justify these images. This is somewhat at odds with photography's historical role of documenting the truth of something or someone's existence.



Christian Boltanski *Monuments* 1986

The writer Van Alphen describes in great detail the ideas of Boltanski's work and its effectiveness in carrying out his objectives. The family album is such a familiar item to so many different cultures, races and classes that its universality would allow Boltanski to reach as many people as possible because with the work (*Sans Souci*) follows the traditional format so closely. But under closer scrutiny it will bring about a significant realization of just how powerful the familial gaze can be. *Sans Souci*, (which in French means *without care* or simply *care free*) was a palace, built in 1745 at Potsdam, Germany, by Frederick II, who had resided there for over 40 years. Boltanski designed *Sans Souci* to appear as a typical photo album might appear. It is in a book format with pictures placed in the same random order not unlike a photo album that one's grandparents might own. The only written text that exists in the book is the title itself. It contains tissue paper between the sheets of photos, but with careful inspection, the tissue paper has the pattern of a spider's web, trying to give an ominous hint perhaps, to the subjects we see placed before us, in this case it happens to be members of the Nazi party in Germany.



As Van Alphen notes, "We see only affectionate friends, lovers, husbands and fathers"<sup>10</sup> What *Sans Souci* does very effectively is make you aware that even with subjects as historically evil and infamous as members of the Nazi Party, you are caught in the web of traditional associations of the family album. In a very subtle way your subconscious overrules your conscious objectivity. The result can be quite unsettling, given the fact that you can be so easily taken in by the images.

The images themselves are intimate portraits of Nazi Soldiers surrounded by family and friends in familiar environments such as family homes, places to eat and drink, parks etc. They are extracted from their historical settings such as the battlefield or more sinister settings, the Nazi Death Camps. The family situations we see in the images can almost be viewed as humorous to me. The Nazi soldier trimming a Christmas tree with tinsel is very surreal when taken out of its family album context. But when we view all of these images in the format presented to us, the effect neutralizes the Nazi-fication of these people and this is quite disconcerting. In essence, they appear to be *without care* to the political times in which they historically lived.

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<sup>10</sup> *Nazism in the Family*: Christian Boltanski

In Marianne Hirsch's book *Family Frames Narrative, Photography and Post memory*. She explores the concept of social coding with the term she coins *familial gaze*. This concept directly relates to both Boltanski's work and more importantly to my own work. The gaze as defined by Hirsch is the act of recognizing and of affiliation. In her own words she states. " Recognizing an image as familial elicits a specific kind of readerly or sPECTORIAL look, an affiliative look through which we are sutured into the image and through which we adopt the image into our own familial narrative."<sup>11</sup>

So even when we gaze upon a stranger's family images, the familial gaze causes us to project this homogeneous viewpoint with the possibility of misrecognition of the subject. In the work of Boltanski, we have Nazi soldiers who may have participated in unmentionable crimes against humanity and yet we see only intimate acts of family interaction. We can relate to them similar occurrences in our own images but in a superficial way. The gaze is strong with its veneer, but also very subtle.

My repulsion was not in the act of viewing the photo album but in my reflective period afterwards, when I realized the gaze could so

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<sup>11</sup> Hirsch, "Masking the Subject," in *Family Frames*, page 98

effectively pacify me. In this revelation of misrecognition, the familial gaze is exposed and the masks are lifted. Not in the moment of viewing but in "post- viewing" when one can reflect upon what has transpired here.

In Boltanski's own words he states his intentions of his work very clearly. "In most of my photographic pieces, I have manipulated the quality of evidence that people assign to photography in order to subvert it, or to show that photography lies, that what it conveys is not reality but a set of cultural codes" This would back up Hirsch's statements about pre-existing culturally imposed imagery. "Identity is no longer individual but defined by the mask of familial relation and photographic convention"<sup>12</sup>

So in the world of amateur photography, the culturally imposed image (as Boltanski would note) would be more under the influence of the gaze, the laymen photographer would not be as conscious that he or she is not documenting reality, but instead perpetuating the reproduction of cultural imposition. The homogeneity of family images is not because of a natural instinct to shoot the same subject. Instead it is because we have been trained to view images this way through

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<sup>12</sup> Nazism in the Family Album: Christian Boltanski's *Sans Souci*



countless reproductions. It is remarkable that such an effect can take place unnoticed and yet there is no sure remedy for such social behavior. It is because of this effect on the taking of family photographs that I find myself inspired by Boltanski's work. But my solution to the problem of the familial gaze differs greatly from Boltanski's approach.



Christian Boltanski, excerpt from Sans Souci 1991



Christian Boltanski, excerpt from Sans Souci 1991



Christian Boltanski, excerpt from Sans Souci 1991



Christian Boltanski, excerpt from Sans Souci 1991



Christian Boltanski, two pages from Sans Souci 1991

## Still Life

The purpose of *Still Life* was to create a visual document describing the physiological and emotional impacts of the relationships between the members of my family. Each individual's family experience is unique. Yet similar experiences do occur between the majorities of families no matter the cultural or social backgrounds. The work in this exhibit is extremely personal to me. However, I believe that the audience can examine the images presented to them and through their own personal interpretations, connect to them by comparing and contrasting their own familial experiences.

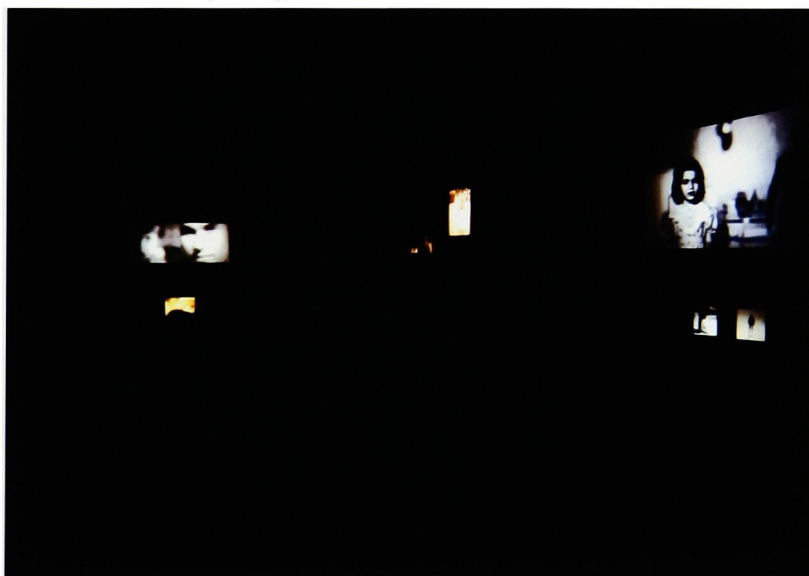
The way in which the installation for *Still Life* was conceived, I wanted to have the images interrelate to one another in a sacred like space. By illuminating the images using light boxes, I could further strip away the traditional format in which we normally view family images. The space was a darkened room with the sole light source being the works themselves. It was my intention that the audience would have a more intimate view of the work even in a communal setting such a gallery space. One of the environments that influenced me greatly was the sacred and meditative setting of a church. The illuminated stained glass images which visually referred to the religious stories of



the bible. I set out to recreate that type of environment as the setting for the personal account of my family experiences.



St Salvator's Chapel England



Still Life: Installation at RIT Spas gallery 2000

It is not my desire to analyze or dissect every aspect of each image that was in the exhibit. Since I believe there should not be an absolute meaning for each image. Rather there should be enough room for personal interpretation. I do believe, however, that certain works will be received differently from viewer to viewer. (Naturally gravitating towards the images that hold a more immediate personal message for them.) They could weave their own personal narrative based on what they themselves have experienced in their own family life. This shared experience within this confine of personal material presented would have to succeed in order for the work to have validity outside of myself. In the response that I had received from the majority of viewers, I would deem the result to be successful.

If photography is susceptible to the social codes and narrations then in some way I am breaking down one method of reading these images and replacing it with another. In my attempt to retell the family experience am I replacing one myth for another? As I have stated before, my family album has failed to convey the realities of my family experience, which includes the generations before me. The work reflects my beliefs in how relationships within generations have a direct influence on the next generation to follow. In essence it is a cyclical experience in which the relationship from parent to child will affect the



child's relationship towards their own children when they themselves become parents.

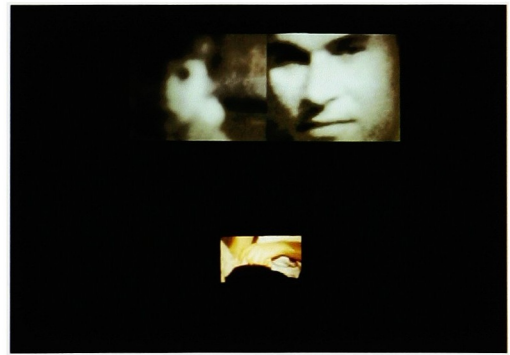
By approaching photography as a digital medium, it gave me the type of freedom similar to a painter. I could now take the images and reorder them into a different type of photo album if you will, so that the conventions of the original format could be broken down. The family album is ill equipped to convey the history I desired to bring to the surface. I needed to use a medium that could allow me to achieve this and yet still maintain the images as recognizable. I take in to consideration that the nature of manipulation causes suspicion, and that it is a difficult task for me to portray a manipulated image as something truthful. Nevertheless, I believe that this was the most effective method for me to convey in visual form the things that were being concealed by the familial gaze.

I would like to discuss several of the images in *Still Life* and what they were intended to portray. In the first group of images there are two portraits side by side within the same panel. They are extreme close-ups of faces, one a male child, and the other of an adult male. The smaller photo is of two hands clasping together. The images are of myself and of my father. This work as a whole is meant to signify my

attempts to hold onto a relationship that never fully materialized the way I had wished it to be. As I have acknowledged earlier to being a child of divorce. I have only brief childhood memories of the interaction between my father and myself. The distance of the relationship would mean only a few encounters yearly. This was extremely difficult for me not to have a father present in my daily life. The only visual documentation I possess of a complete family unit is during the event of my first birthday party. The images seem so unreal to me. Even though the event did take place. I cannot remember the event that took place that day. There are no other images in my album of a complete family unit.



Still Life: Installation at RIT Spas gallery 2000



Still Life: Installation at RIT Spas gallery 2000

The original images in my family album cannot produce truthful representations of the relationship between my father and myself. It fails to transcend "the specific kind of viewing" that the familial gaze gives to us. Or in other words, it can only give us this one-dimensional view of the event at hand. It cannot communicate future circumstances and their emotional, physiological consequences to the relationship. So in effect, this reconstructed group of images is a more fitting monument between my father and myself.

The process of making the work was in itself a journey. Sifting through numerous images from my family collection. I encountered pictures that I have no recollection of. Others I can remember but many more are clearly before my time. It can be difficult to separate memories from the emotions that are connected to them, especially if they had left an indelible mark on someone during their childhood. The fact that one might have had a tumultuous relationship with a parent or parents, (or possibly a detached or distant one); these interactions are not portrayed in the images that we seek to create and catalogue in our traditional family albums.

In my family album, there does not exist a picture that conveys the impact of my parents' divorce. There is not even an image that

documents the event historically for me. I cannot find any picture, which gives evidence to the troubled relationships between father and daughter, father and son, mother and daughter or mother and son. Photographs that adhere to the traditional format cannot document sufficiently my family history. This is why I had chosen the strategy of manipulation and reconstruction. Granted that they are manipulated to suit my personal narrative. What I am trying to display here is the undocumented, unspoken inner relationships between family members. The conveying of loss and the sense of time passed. Visual statements documenting the results and consequences of the dysfunctional relationships and the yearnings of unfulfilled expectations.

In the next set of images, a small child is in a room seemingly being menaced by a tall-silhouetted figure in the background. The shadow is meant to portray the negative space of a father figure. To suggest the absence of paternal support and to signify what was missing in this flawed relationship. The main image is surreal or dream like, attempting to draw upon subconscious imagery where events in our childhood could possibly have direct influence upon us later as an adult. How this might have influence on how we conduct our lives in order to "fix" or compensate for our past insufficiencies. I believe this



exhibit is an attempt by me at "fixing things". Trying to reconcile what was missing and document it. Most importantly for myself but allowing others to share in the process who possibly could have had similar experiences. This process was therapeutic for me. It allowed me to express feelings and emotions that were long suppressed and unspoken.



Still Life: Installation at RIT Spas gallery 2000

The Image entitled "The House" is symbolic to me of emotional attachments I have held on inanimate objects. Having grown up in the same house as my family before me. It represented a symbolic connection to the things that I had no control over. Such as the loss of family members and the passing of time, which further distanced my connections. When the house itself was being lost, it was very traumatic to me because of the symbolic connections I placed on it to members of my family. Since I believe one of my main fears is the

disconnection from family. This fear could be due to the fragmented family experience I had growing up and my inability to manage the circumstances. Attaching significance to inanimate objects such as a small keepsake given to me by my grandmother days before her death and objects as monumental as the home that we would eventually lose.

It would seem to be detrimental to give such significance to these objects. And indeed they were, for in the end, these items did nothing to assuage the emotions and fears that I have described. But are not photographs also objects that attempt to hold on to moments in our lives? People we know? Places we have lived? As we have learned when we photograph our families, we have a pre-conditioned notion of what to shoot and what not to shoot. There are not many who would document fights among family members, the disciplining of a child, divorce proceedings, times of illness, etc. Instead we are left with the banality and the sameness of these images which do very little to portray these events that I have just illustrated.



Still Life: Installation at RIT Spas gallery 2000

It has been my hope that the images that I have created would trigger an internal conversation within oneself. That the environment that I have created was not unlike that of a sacred space where it would be possible for personal reflection about what these photographs might mean to an individual. That even though they have been removed from their original construct and have been deconstructed and manipulated, they could be a more accurate document of a familial experience.

Above all else I wished to subvert the familial gaze of traditional images and still maintain some form of communal viewing. The most difficult task is to portray such personal subject matter but not alienate the audience who views it. Since the gaze prevents the viewer from a deeper reading of what's being displayed in family photographs. For *Still Life* to succeed, I would have to bring some form of subjectivity to the genre of family photographs and somehow prevent them from turning into the objects that these social codes normally create. In other words "the family album overrules the subjectivities of what we expect to be represented in the snapshots."<sup>13</sup> I created a new narrative by digitally altering the family album. I believe this was the most effective choice of medium, since the computer allowed me various degrees of freedom to rework the photographs without destroying their recognition as family images. This was a difficult balancing act on my part. To change the images from their original form and then portray them in there new manipulated state as a more accurate narrative. My success with the material was in part because of my openness with my feelings about my family and my ability to present the images in a format that would best convey my message.

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<sup>13</sup> Nazism in the Family Album: Christian Boltanski's *Sans Souci* by Ernst Van Alphen

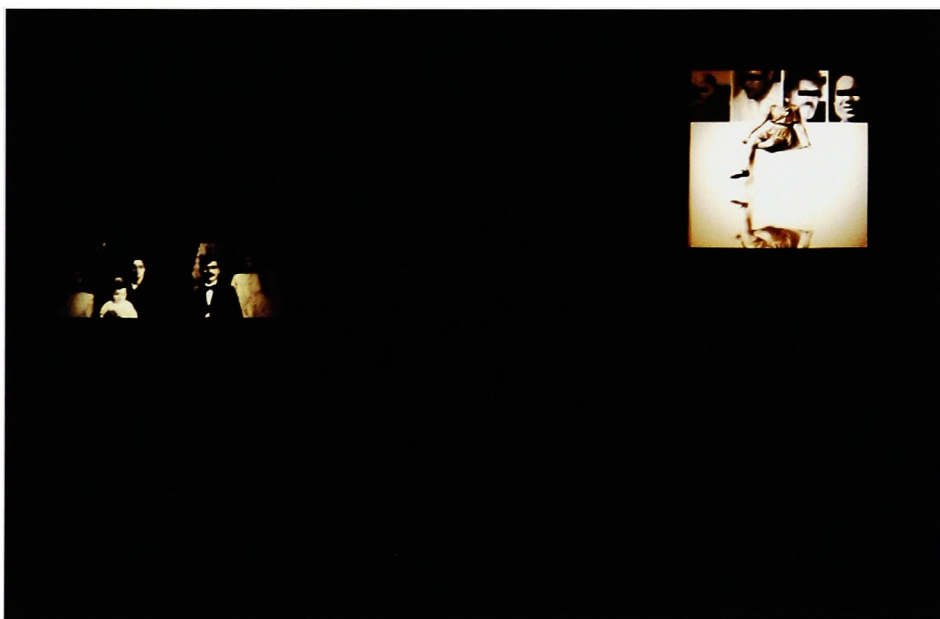


But will this change how people take family photographs? Alas, no, I do not believe that the familial gaze can be dismantled on a large enough scale to change the social conventions that still exist within our culture. The perpetuation of these conventions by popular culture is very powerful and successful. There are certain factions in our society that willfully embraces these falsehoods to serve their agendas. As I have used as a prime example. The religious right being the most vocal proponent of familial myths in our society will never let go of it. Otherwise it would undermine their entire belief structure in what it means to be a good Christian family within the United States.

Television may not resemble the 1950's any longer, but the conventions still operate to this day. Television commercials use these conventions as a way to not only sell their products, but to sell an image of a way of life. This image is the romanticized family image that still remains as attractive to us today as it was to the generation of *Father Knows Best*. It would be quite an event to have an alternative lifestyle couple portrayed in a commercial as a productive and welcomed family unit in our society. This would be something that the conservative movement would not enjoy seeing.

Having identified the familial gaze and the romanticized version of the family that it proliferates. I hope that I have better equipped the viewer on how these conventions work when we view family snapshots. That the mythologized family that we see promoted by television and in certain political movements in the United States. Is not representative of how human beings truly experience family life. That even when we are aware of these conventions we cannot entirely overcome their seductions.

*Still Life* cannot overcome these obstacles in a larger sense because of the overwhelming nature of the social conventions. But in its own environment, it could retreat from them, allowing the viewer to reflect upon what they have seen in this private space. It is my hope that the installation has succeeded in fulfilling my longing for a more proper narrative of my family history. That I have been able to fill in the gaps for myself the things that otherwise were left undocumented. That I have been able to contribute to the ongoing discourse of family photographs and how they are viewed in our society.



Still Life: Installation at RIT Spas gallery 2000



Still Life: Installation at RIT Spas gallery 2000

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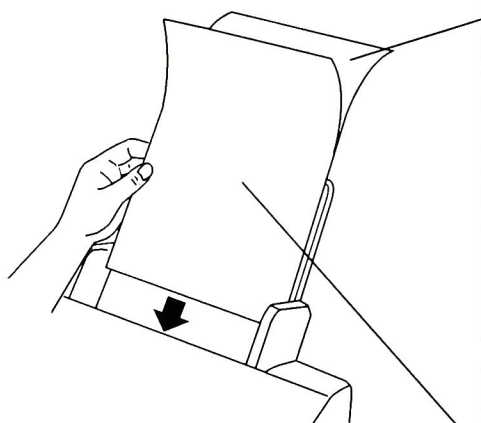


# EPSON Double-Sided Matte Paper

**Loading Support Sheet**  
**Feuille de support**  
**Foglio di supporto**  
**Toevoersteinvel**

**Zuführungsschutzblatt**  
**Hoja-soporte**  
**Colocar a Folha de Suporte**

When loading paper at the top of the printer:  
Papier von oben in den Drucker einlegen:  
Chargement du papier par le haut de l'imprimante:  
Cargar papel en la parte superior de impresora:  
Caricamento della carta dall'alto:  
Alimentar o papel pela entrada superior:  
Bij het laden van papier via de bovenzijde van de printer:



**Loading Support Sheet**

Place printed side **face up**.

**Zuführungsschutzblatt**

Legen Sie das Zuführungsschutzblatt mit der bedruckten Seite **nach oben** ein.

**Feuille de support**

La face imprimée doit être vers le **haut**.

**Hoja-soporte**

Coloque la cara impresa hacia **arriba**.

**Foglio di supporto**

Inserite il foglio con il lato stampabile rivolto verso l'**alto**.

**Colocar a Folha de Suporte**

Coloque a face impressa **para cima**.

**Toevoersteinvel**

Plaats het papier met de bedrukte zijde **naar boven**.

Double-Sided Matte Paper

Double-Sided Matte Paper

Papier Couché Double Face

Matte Paper – Alto Gramaje Doble Cara

Carta opaca "matte" per stampe fronte/retro

Papel Mate de Dupla Face

Double-Sided Matte Paper

